

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution

**No. 8**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Chávez**

January 23, 2013

---

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 8—Relative to Abraham Lincoln’s birthday.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 8, as introduced, Chávez. Abraham Lincoln’s birthday.

This measure would declare that President Abraham Lincoln be honored on February 12, 2013, the anniversary of his birthday.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United  
2 States, and one of our nation’s most respected and admired  
3 Americans, rose from humble beginnings to become President of  
4 the United States and courageously led his country during its  
5 darkest time, the Civil War; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Lincoln brought a profound honesty and  
7 integrity to the Office of the President, and will always be  
8 remembered as “Honest Abe.” Most of all, he will forever be  
9 associated with saving the Union and with the abolition of slavery;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was born on February 12, 1809,  
12 in Kentucky, and spent the first seven years of his life there; and

13 WHEREAS, In his entire life, President Lincoln was only able  
14 to attend school for a total of one year. This lack of formal  
15 education only made him hungrier for more knowledge, and he

1 mastered the Bible, the works of William Shakespeare, and the  
2 law; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1846, he was elected to the United States  
4 Congress as the only member of the Whig Party in the Illinois  
5 congressional delegation, where he forthrightly articulated his  
6 views against the Mexican War and his vehement opposition to  
7 the extension of slavery, choosing not to run for reelection in 1848;  
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Soon after President Lincoln joined the Republican  
10 Party, a new political party opposed to the extension of slavery,  
11 in 1858 the Republicans nominated him for the United States  
12 Senate. In his nomination acceptance speech, Lincoln stated: “A  
13 house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government  
14 cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect  
15 the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall —  
16 but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one  
17 thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest  
18 the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall  
19 rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or  
20 its advocates will push it forward, till it shall become lawful in all  
21 the States, old as well as new — North as well as South.” He lost  
22 in a close election to Stephen Douglas, the Democratic Party  
23 candidate; and

24 WHEREAS, Just two years later, having won the Republican  
25 party nomination for President of the United States, Mr. Lincoln  
26 won election by a small margin, defeating, among other candidates,  
27 Senator Steven Douglas; and

28 WHEREAS, Shortly after assuming office, the Civil War began.  
29 As the war continued, Lincoln expanded the objectives of the war  
30 beyond saving and restoring the Union, but also to freeing the  
31 slaves and abolishing the institution of slavery; and

32 WHEREAS, On September 22, 1862, Lincoln took the first  
33 major step toward the total abolition of slavery in the United States  
34 by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, which took effect on  
35 January 1, 1863; and

36 WHEREAS, President Lincoln enunciated the nation’s loftiest  
37 ideals during its darkest moment following the bloodiest battle of  
38 the Civil War. His Gettysburg Address, regarded as one of the  
39 finest speeches in the English language, was delivered by him at  
40 Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on November 19, 1863, while dedicating

1 a cemetery for those killed in the Battle of Gettysburg, which took  
2 place from July 1 to July 3, 1863, between the Army of the  
3 Potomac and the Army of Northern Virginia; and

4 WHEREAS, In his Gettysburg Address, Lincoln reaffirmed the  
5 nation’s foremost founding principles, declaring the United States  
6 to be a nation “conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the  
7 proposition that all men are created equal,” while assuring a nation  
8 still consumed by war that “this nation, under God, shall have a  
9 new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the  
10 people for the people, shall not perish from the earth”; and

11 WHEREAS, To ensure that the provisions of the Emancipation  
12 Proclamation could not be construed as a mere wartime measure,  
13 President Lincoln insisted that enactment of a constitutional  
14 amendment abolishing slavery be included in the 1864 Republican  
15 Party platform; and

16 WHEREAS, Upon reelection to a second term as President in  
17 1864, Abraham Lincoln actively supported the passage in Congress  
18 of what became the 13th Amendment to the United States  
19 Constitution, the copy of the joint resolution referring the 13th  
20 Amendment to the states for ratification, which to this day is  
21 housed in the National Archives, actually bears Abraham Lincoln’s  
22 signature, even though the President has no formal constitutional  
23 role in the amendment process, and joint resolutions do not go to  
24 the White House for either signature or approval; and

25 WHEREAS, Lincoln ultimately reunified the nation and brought  
26 about a successful conclusion to our nation’s bloodiest war, as the  
27 Civil War ended on April 9, 1865, with the surrender of General  
28 Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia to the Union General,  
29 Ulysses S. Grant, at Appomattox Court House; and

30 WHEREAS, Only five days later, on April 14, 1865, Abraham  
31 Lincoln was shot while viewing a performance of “My American  
32 Cousin” at Ford’s Theater in Washington, D.C., and died the next  
33 day, not living to see his dreams of the formal abolition of slavery  
34 and the restoration of the Union realized; and

35 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln’s accomplishments and legacy  
36 as the “Great Emancipator” and “Preserver of Our Union” are  
37 perhaps unsurpassed in the history of our nation, and in this  
38 sesquicentennial year of the enactment of the Emancipation  
39 Proclamation, the third year of the Civil War, and the Gettysburg  
40 Address, it is particularly appropriate to recognize Abraham

1 Lincoln, a portrait of whom hangs in a place of honor in the  
2 California State Assembly Chambers; now, therefore, be it  
3 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
4 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature hereby declares that  
5 President Abraham Lincoln be honored on February 12, 2013, the  
6 anniversary of his birthday, not only in recognition of his numerous  
7 accomplishments and contributions to our nation, but also as the  
8 virtual symbol of the American dream, whereby an ordinary person  
9 from the most humble beginnings can reach the pinnacle of  
10 American society to be elected President, and to serve his country  
11 with honor and courage; and be it further  
12 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
13 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.